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OPPORTUNITY CLASS PROCEDURES. PLANNING, GROUPING, SCHEDULING, ORGANIZING.

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DESIGNED TO HELP TEACHERS OF OPPORTUNITY CLASSES ORGANIZE THE CLASS AND PLAN FOR DAILY ACTIVITIES, THIS GUIDE INCLUDES DIRECTIONS FOR SETTING UP A SCHEDULE, PREPARING THE PLAN BOOK, AND DEVELOPING CLASSROOM PROCEDURES. CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAINABLE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED AND EDUCABLE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PUPILS AND A DISCUSSION OF THE IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT OF THESE CHILDREN ARE INCLUDED. THE LEARNING EXPERIENCES RECOMMENDED IN THE GUIDE ARE BASED ON REAL LIFE SITUATIONS, AND SKILLS ARE TAUGHT IN A SETTING WITHIN THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE. EMPHASIS IS ON DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY, DEVELOPMENT OF BASIC SKILLS IN LANGUAGE ARTS AND ARITHMETIC, AND DEVELOPMENT OF RUDIMENTARY CONCEPTS WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY HELP THE CHILD BECOME A SELF-SUPPORTING ADULT. THE IQ, MENTAL AGE, AND MENTAL GRADE AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING ARE DISCUSSED. THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORDS SUCH AS CUMULATIVE RECORDS, STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES, INVENTORY TEST SCORES, AND TEACHER REPORTS ARE STRESSED. (JZ)

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ELEMENTARY SPECIAL CURRICULUM

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

PLANNING

GROUPING

SCHEDULING

ORGANIZING

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
THREE EAST TWENTY-FIFTH STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21218

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ELEMENTARY SPECIAL CURRICULUM

Foreword

OPPORTUNITY CLASS PROCEDURES

"Opportunity Class Procedures" is presented as a guide to the Opportunity Class teacher in organizing her class and planning for daily activities. Help is offered in setting up the schedule, preparing the Plan Book, organizing the groups and classroom procedures.

The teacher should become thoroughly familiar with all the information offered in this guide. Complete knowledge of every area presented will greatly assist in classroom procedures.

Successful Opportunity Class teaching requires the highest level of operation in planning a program which will best meet the needs of the mentally retarded child. This requires intelligent planning, because the attention and interest of a handicapped child is a very illusive commodity. It can be gained only by careful planning and the use of materials which will captivate their sustained interest. There are many suggestions in this guide which, if carefully followed, will bring a successful relationship with the children and a program which is stimulating and forward-moving.

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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

I. Types of Retarded Groups in the Elementary School System

A. The Trainable Mentally Retarded

The Trainable Mentally Retarded group is made up of the most severely mentally retarded children. The intelligence quotients (IQ) of these children range from .30 to .55. They are called trainable, as opposed to educable, because they are literally unable to learn anything but a few rudimentary basic skills. They may learn to do some counting, to recognize some few protective words, and to recognize their names, but they never develop enough academic skill to be self-sufficient. The trainable group is to be thought of as dependent throughout their lives.

The term "trainable" means that they can be helped to develop habits, attitudes and social competencies which will make them adjust in family and social communities.

The trainable children receive their education in separate schools which provide a curriculum designed to especially meet their needs. Sometimes for various reasons, an occasional trainable child will be found in an Opportunity Class. The teacher should make a very careful study of these children to determine whether they can stay in the Opportunity Class and work with the slowest group, or must be referred for placement in a trainable school.

B. Educable Mentally Retarded

The Educable Mentally Retarded constitute the large group of mentally handicapped children in the elementary school, who receive their education in Opportunity Classes. Their I.Q. range, in general, is from .55 to .79.

These children because of their intellectual endowment, can only show academic growth in accordance with their limited mental capacity. The Opportunity Class teacher realizes this and plans her program accordingly. However, the teacher of mentally retarded children also must realize that they can attain considerable growth in habits, attitudes, social competencies and occupational skills, and should place particular emphasis on these areas.

II. Identification and Placement of Mentally Retarded Children

A. Identifying the Mentally Retarded Children in the Regular Grades

Mentally handicapped children enter the public schools in the kindergarten or first grade along with all of the other elementary school children. They work with their groups until they are located by the regular grade teacher when she notices their general slowness, immaturity and inability to grasp concepts. This may not show up in a climate which provides latitude for slow maturation until the child is in the second grade. In general, most children come to Opportunity Classes at age 8. In a conference with the principal, the teacher notes these children and requests an individual intelligence test to verify her suspicions. The individual intelligence test is administered by a qualified psychologist to determine the I.Q. If the I.Q. falls in the appropriate range (.55 - .79), the principal informs the parent through a conference and advises him of the need for placement in an Opportunity Class because the child is not progressing in the regular grades and requires the special curriculum provided in the Opportunity Class.

B. Placement of Mentally Retarded Children in Opportunity Classes

Parental recognition of the child's learning problem and retarded ability is necessary to provide the understanding and the cooperation which are of paramount importance in creating the necessary learning environment for the mentally retarded. Sometimes several conferences are needed in order to prepare the parent to accept the transfer of the child to an Opportunity Class. Every effort should be made to obtain parental consent but when this is not possible and the case is acute, arbitrary placement may be made through consultation with the Director of Special Education for procedure. Children are placed as vacancies occur throughout the school year as well as in the general school reorganization in June.

III. The Education of Mentally Retarded Children

A. Method by Which They Learn

Mentally retarded children "learn to do by doing." Being told about anything is abstract, and it is difficult for the retarded child to formulate impressions and concepts through auditory stimulation alone. The ability to project ideas from ideas is simply not a part of them. These children are very factual. When they use concrete materials, they are handling, feeling, experiencing, not just listening. Their learning must, in fact, always be a three dimensional experience. They must experience; they must listen; and they must verbalize. They learn as they live and experience.

The teacher who wants to help mentally retarded children is constantly challenged for ways in which ideas can be clarified and understandings can be extended. In reading, concepts must be real and

and vital. Experiences, visual aids, demonstrations and dramatizations are used to accomplish learning. In arithmetic, concrete materials are used, real life problems are used for background and skills are taught in a setting within the child's experience. The work period is a vital, real on-going opportunity for the class to use tools and materials and grow in the skill of using them. An academic approach to learning is never employed. It is almost as though the children must learn "in spite of themselves." They learn because they see the need to learn. They learn because of a logical, factual, and vital approach, which has foreseen possible pitfalls, and is prepared with the extending experiences which will clarify learning.

B. The Areas of Learning

Emphasis for learning for the mentally retarded is on:

1. The development of personalities which are able to make the best of all they have to offer.
2. The development of the basic skills in language arts and arithmetic of which they are capable.
3. The development of the rudimentary concepts and skills which will eventually help them to be self-supporting.

The teacher makes the most of every single aptitude in a positive setting where contributions are valued and accepted.

The children must be helped to understand the world in which they live, to appreciate the opportunities offered to them, and to recognize the ways in which they can contribute. This is done through areas of learning in Social Studies units. The teacher recognizes that she will have to build concepts that will increase understandings and develop skills which will increase competencies. The children will be

helped to know about their homes, community, city, state, and country. They will learn their privileges and responsibilities at each level of their development so that they can adjust and contribute to their environment to as great a degree as their capabilities permit.

KNOWING THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD

The more information the teacher can gather about the child, the greater will be her understanding of that child. In order to teach mentally retarded children, the teacher must examine every source of information so that a learning program may be set up in which each child will reach his potential. The following areas of information about each child should be investigated by the teacher.

I. The Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.)

The IQ's of Opportunity Class children range, in general, from .55 to .79. If one sights 100 as a mediam I.Q., one can quickly realize the handicap under which many mentally retarded children operate. Therefore, basic to the teaching of mentally retarded children is the teacher's complete familiarity with the I.Q. of each child in her class. The I.Q. will guide her in determining the level and pace at which each child can be expected to work and will offer the data needed to determine the Mental Age.

II. The Mental Age

The teacher will find an understanding of the mental age of great value in working with an Opportunity Class. The mental age indicates the approximate intellectual level at which the child operates. If a child's mental age is,for instance, 8, he should be achieving <u>approximately</u> what the normal eight year old can achieve. One cannot depend completely on such a comparison, but the mental age will serve as a guide to approximate the intellectual level.

The mental age changes as the chronological age changes. The I.Q. remains the same unless the child is retested and a new I.Q. is established. For practical purposes, the new mental age is computed at the beginning of each school year. A booklet with the mental ages computed in chart form is available in the school office and is used for referral to determine the mental age. If such a booklet is not available, the teacher can compute the mental age by using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{C.A. (months)} \times \text{I.Q.}}{12} = \text{M.A.}$$

III. The Mental Grade

The teacher often needs to check a child's progress in terms of his intellectual capacity. As previously stated, the Mental Age (M.A.) offers a key to performance.

By using the M.A. as a base,a good estimate of the approximate working level can be obtained by subtracting 5 from the M.A. The remainder indicates the general grade working level at which the child is capable of working, ..e.

M.A. 5.3
5.0
.3 Approximate working level should be the readiness level.

MA.. 6.5
5.0
1.5 Approximate working level should be beginning first grade.

M.A. 7.8
5.0
2.8 Approximate working level should be second grade.

Many times the child's achievement level and mental grade agree. Sometimes they do not agree. The important issue is that the teacher should have an approximate target in mind as she works with the handicapped child. Knowledge of the mental grade serves as a safety valve for the teacher preventing too great pressure or too little persuasion, as the

IV. School Records

A. Cumulative Record

The child's Cumulative Record is a very valuable source of information for the teacher. It contains information about each of the following:

1. Personality
2. Identification Data
3. General Habits
4. Social and Cultural Information
5. Scholastic Records
6. Physical Condition and Health
7. Departmental Referrals and Recommendations

B. Miscellaneous Data

The Cumulative Record Folder may also contain miscellaneous information which may include the following:

1. Binet or Other Individual Intelligence Test Record
2. Information from Social Agencies
3. White Health Card
4. Attendance Card - indicating attendance problems
5. Notes from Home
6. Teacher's Summary of Anecdotal material
7. Emergency Card (whom to notify in case of emergency)

V. Information from Previous Teachers

Valuable data may be gathered through conferences with the child's previous teacher. Infomration may be gained in the following areas:

1. Work habits
2. Peer group adjustment

3. Leadership potential

4. Interest and attention span

5. Areas of interest

6. Areas of need

7. Indications of emotional maladjustments

Behavior with a previous teacher may vary markedly when contrasted with the present behavioral pattern. Nevertheless the more available information the teacher has, the more thorough her understanding of her children.

VI. Standardized Test Results

Standardized tests in reading and arithmetic are administered to Opportunity Class children at the beginning of each school year.Standardized Test results are valuable to the teacher because they indicate the general achievement level in these two academic areas. Test results make a definite contribution when the teacher is determining the teaching groups in reading and arithmetic. They are, however, not altogether reliable especially in the lower levels. Children with minimum ability often guess and make scores in the first level when they are really in the readiness level. The teacher should analyze each part of the test. This will give her clues as to areas of weakness and can offer leads in preparing lesson plans to remedy the weaknesses.

VII. Teacher Prepared Tests

A. Inventory Tests

Inventory tests are a valuable means of finding out what the child knows and where his knowledge is hazy or inaccurate. The results of these tests form the basis of the teacher's plans for specific lessons

to meet the children's needs. The inventory tests may be made up to test any segment of information. They may be oral or written depending upon the level of the children and the area being tested.

B. Check Tests

Check tests are designed by the teacher to determine the child's progress in any area which is being presented.These tests are valuable as they give direction to further planning. They indicate whether the children have learned what has been taught or whether they need further activity to fix learning.

Check tests may be either oral or written, depending upon the need and level of achievement. They are always informal in nature and should in no way ever threaten children.

C. Suggestions for Specific Inventory Tests

1. Reading

If the class is new to the teacher, she can group the pupils tentatively on the basis of the results of the last standardized reading test results. If there is a wide range of reading ability in the class, it may be better to make the tentative groupings at the middle of the grade, i.e., 0.0 to 1.5; 1.5 to 2.5, etc. Three sets of readers of average difficulty are necessary to determine working level:

a. One set at grade level

b. One set one grade level below

c. One set one and half or two grade levels below

Give each pupil in the group an opportunity to read one page aloud. Note the number of words on the page that are missed. If the child must be told more than two words (excluding proper names or unusual words), the reader is too difficult. If, however,

he misses only one or two words, it is at a good working level of the level of difficulty. Should he miss none of the words, but read fluently and give evidence by answering questions that he comprehends what he has read, he is reading at a level of ease, and will need more difficult reading material to challenge him.

If the reader at the test level proves to be too difficult, the pupil later reads a page from the reader one grade below, etc. The pupil reads from each successively easier reader until the working level is determined. For example: John tests 2.5.

1. In reading orally a page in a second reader, he misses many words. This reader is too difficult.
2. In reading orally in a first reader, he misses only one or two words. This is a reader at his working level.
3. When reading orally in a primer, no didficulties are encountered. This is at a level of ease and will make a good supplementary reader for independent reading.

If, however, the reader at the grade level of the reading test results prove to be easy, the pupil should try reading at a grade level higher. In this case, continue to use more difficult material until the level is reached at which approximately two words on a page are missed.

2. Arithmetic

Analysis of the Standardized Achievement tests will indicate general areas of achievement as well as areas of need. The test booklets should be examined for failures and successes to help the teacher determine the level of achievement. In addition,

informal tests for knowledge of specific skills should be given to determine teaching areas. For example, the one hundred combinations in subtraction and addition as well as the multiplication and addition facts should be taken in order of difficulty and taught systematically after testing determines need.

The teacher should devise informal tests to determine what the children know and what they need to know. Attention will be focused on these areas:

a. Size
b. Position
c. Time and temperature
d. Quantity
e. Linear measure
f. Weight
g. Form
h. Dry and liquid measure
i. United States mail
j. Directions and abbreviations
k. Fundamental skills: x + - ÷
l. Functional parts: fractions

3. Social Studies

An inventory should be given:

a. To find out what <u>experiences</u> the children have had within the unit topic (This will be the foundation on which the new information will be built.)
b. To find out what the children know about the unit topic
c. To find out what misinformation the children have

An inventory should be given before starting any new topic or unit.

4. Language

Attention should be given to the children's spontaneous responses and conversation with each other. Discussions during the social studies period should be noted. Strengths and areas of need would be indicated by:

a. Mispronunciation and careless enunciation

b. Errors in correct usage of words

c. Single word or word groups instead of sentences to express thoughts (meaning, not clear)

d. Other language needs, such as running sentences together with "ands," limited vocabulary, etc.

5. Handwriting

Any set of pupils' seatwork papers will enable the teacher to discover handwriting needs. Pupils can be grouped to meet needs as follows:

a. Those needing to be taught manuscript writing

b. Those needing to be taught script

c. Those needing remedial work on the form of certain letters

d. Those whose handwriting is good, but who need to be held up to standard in all written work.

The teacher will plan the handwriting lessons to meet those specific needs.

6. Spelling

The teacher should use the spelling lists provided in the LANGUAGE ARTS GUIDE . An inventory should be begun at the 1B-1A level. All words should be dictated sentences. For young children draw pictures for words needed in sentences and not on the list at or below the grade level being tested. For older children, write the needed word on the board as the sentence is dictated. An inventory of one grade level, when dictated in sentences or word groups, will take several days to complete.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DAILY PROGRAM

Planning the daily program has a two-fold purpose for the teacher of the mentally handicapped. The structure and order of the program serve as a training device planned with and for the children. The balance of activities provides the means of developing the child emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually.

I. Overview of Daily Program

A. Structure of the Daily Program

Each Opportunity Class must have a daily learning program which includes:

Reading

Arithmetic

Handwriting, spelling, and language skills

Social living (social studies, health, and science)

Social living activities

Physical education and relaxation

Music

B. Time Allotments for Learning Activities

The exact time allotments for each of the learning activities is listed under "The Time Allotments for the Daily Program" beginning on Page 18. Adherence to the listed time allotment is required. Experimentation and experience have indicated that elementary mentally retarded children seem to make the most progress in a program which operates according to prescribed time allotments.

C. Order of Activities in the Daily Program

Before the teacher can determine the order of the learning activities in the daily program and formulate a schedule, the following aspects of her class must be studied:

1. Chronological age range
2. Mental age range
3. Socio-economic background
4. Attention span range
5. Energy output range

An understanding of this pertinent information about the children helps to determine the order of the learning program. For instance, it is not wise to begin the daily program with a quiet activity like reading if the children are consistently highly excited in the morning when they come to school. It is better to have music at that time because of its therapeutic value. The music can then be followed by a reading, arithmetic, or social living period which requires sustained attention.

Quiet periods should be balanced with periods which require movement. This provides much more attention and interest and prevents the children from becoming restless and disinterested. The following caution should always be observed: activities should be scheduled so that the Social Living periods are always followed by social living activity periods.

Several arrangements may be tried before determining the permanent order of activities or schedule by which the children will be able to work most effectively.

D. Adherence to Schedule

Once the order of activities, or schedule, has been determined,it should be maintained. An established schedule provides for consistent and methodical use of school time so that the children can learn to adjust to change of activities and group living. They develop self-control in social and organized situations and become aware of the

need for organization and planning in daily living. This is very important in the education of mentally retarded children. Adherence to a fixed order of activities teaches these children to plan for their needs and to evaluate their progress in terms of an orderly progression toward objectives in their learning program.

Variety in the program must be provided in techniques, methods, kinds of activities, and choice of materials. The schedule is the organization which provides a basic framework from which activities evolve. Because of the need for a great amount of repetition before learning takes place, the challenge to the teacher of the mentally retarded is to be able to provide interesting and vital experiences at the same level for a long enough time to insure learning and yet provide a stimulating variety of activities which promote interest and growth.

II. The Content of the Daily Program

The daily scheduled program for Opportunity Class children should include the following learning experiences:

A. Opening Exercises and Orientation

1. The opening exercises include:

a. Recitation of the Pledge to the Flag

(Intermediate children also like to hear and recite the American's Creed.)

b. Singing of a patriotic song

2. The orientation period includes:

   a. Determining the day of the week, month of the year, and date of the year (Some classes, particularly primary, also like to discuss and record the weather and season.)

   b. Checking attendance, noting with the children the number present (boys and girls) and absent (boys and girls) and the total attendance

B. Reading

   1. Provision for a general assignment for reading groups

   2. Teaching of reading groups

   3. Provision for specific assignments based on reading lesson with each group

C. Arithmetic

   1. Provision for a general assignment for arithmetic groups

   2. Teaching of arithmetic groups

   3. Provision of specific assignments based on arithmetic lessons with each group

D. Handwriting, Spelling, and Language

   1. Handwriting

      Provision for two groups in handwriting skills in primary classes and the total class in intermediate classes

   2. Spelling

      Provision for two groups in spelling skills

   3. Language

      Provision for activities which develop oral and written language skills and listening skills

E. Social Living

Provision of the learning activities designed to promote the acquisition of the social living, health, or science concepts necessary to life adjustment.

F. Activity Period and Clean Up

Provision of class or group activities which offer the children opportunities to increase understanding through participation in creative activities and handwork (These activities are always planned to correlate with the social living, health, or science units.)

Provision for assigned duties to promote training in clean up skills

G. Music and Rhythm

Provision of music experiences in singing, listening, rhythm, appreciation, and use of musical instruments

H. Physical Education and Relaxation

Provision of a balanced program in physical education

Provision of a short relaxation period as a break between quiet activities

III. The Time Allotments for the Daily Program

A. Full Day Program

1. Low Primary (Young, Immature Group)

Opening Exercises	-	10 minutes
Orientation	-	20 minutes
Reading	-	45 minutes
Arithmetic	-	40 minutes
Handwriting & Spelling	-	20 minutes

Language Skills - 25 minutes

(a) Listening

(b) Speaking

Physical Education - 25 minutes

Music and Rhythm - 25 minutes

Social Living - 20 minutes

Work Period - 45 minutes

Clean Up - 15 minutes

Relaxation - 10 minutes

2. Standard Opportunity (Primary or Intermediate)

Opening Exercises - 10 minutes

Reading - 60 minutes

Arithmetic - 50 minutes

* Handwriting,Spelling, and Language - 30 minutes

Music and Rhythm - 20 minutes

Social Living - 30 minutes

Activity Period and Clean Up - 60 minutes

Physical Education - 30 minutes

Relaxation - 10 minutes

* Handwriting and Spelling - 3 days per week

Literature and Library - 1 day per week

Language: Speaking - 1 day per week

Listening

Writing

B. Part Time Program (A.M. or P.M.)

1. Low Primary (Young, Immature Group)

Opening Exercises	-	10 minutes
Orientation	-	15 minutes
Reading	-	45 minutes
Arithmetic	-	40 minutes
Handwriting and Spelling	-	20 minutes
Language Skills	-	20 minutes
(a) Listening		
(b) Speaking		
Social Living	-	20 minutes
Activity and Clean Up	-	40 minutes
Music and Rhythm	-	15 minutes
Physical Education	-	15 minutes

2. Standard (Primary or Intermediate)

Opening Exercises and Orientation	-	10 minutes
Reading	-	60 minutes
Arithmetic	-	50 minutes
* Handwriting, Spelling, and Language	-	25 minutes
Social Living	-	25 minutes
Activity and Clean Up	-	40 minutes
Music	-	15 minutes
Physical Education and Relaxation	-	15 minutes

*	Handwriting and Spelling	-	3 days per week
	Literature and Library	-	1 day per week
	Language: Listening	-	1 day per week
	Speaking		
	Writing		

THE TEACHING PLAN

I. The Need for a Teaching Plan

Successful teaching requires definite preparation and careful planning by the teacher. Without a plan to guide the work, activities will become a matter of chance, or momentary inspiration. Mentally retarded children are remarkably sensitive to participation in activities which have no logical sequence. They react negatively in conduct and participation to poorly planned activities. Many people think that because of their limited intelligence, these children will go along with anything which the teacher prepares for them. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Mentally retarded children will only respond with understanding and enthusiasm to <u>carefully</u> thought out and planned activities.

The teacher must have a long-term perspective on the activities she plans for her class. A definite objective is needed in every phase of the program so that the children's needs will be met and they will show progressive growth. This must not be left to chance.

II. The Kinds of Teaching Plans

A. The Long-Term Plan

A long-term plan enumerates broad concepts and skills which the teacher hopes to develop with the children. Long-term objectives are necessary for every scheduled experience. These objectives make clear the <u>direction</u> of the daily program. For instance, there could be no Social Living and Social Living Activity periods if the teacher did not set up a series of problems which were to be solved as the unit developed. In other words, the specifics of daily planning are dependent upon the long-term goals. The teacher sights the skills

which have been planned as the long-term objectives. Then she determines the specific segment which can be developed in a week. These are then further broken up into daily lessons. This careful statement of daily objectives with the references and related materials constitute the teacher's weekly plan.

B. The Weekly Plan

The weekly plan presents the content of each area listed in the schedule, day by day.

1. Reading

   a. Basal Text Reading Lesson

      (1) The text used with each group and page references

      (2) The type lesson planned for each group (background, phrase study, word study, comprehension or culmination)

      (3) The specific list of phrases or words to be developed with an indication of phonetic element chosen for each word which is developed

   b. Supplementary Text Reading Lessons

      (1) The text used and page references

      (2) Purpose of lesson

      (3) Skill being developed

2. Arithmetic

   a. The life situation setting for each group activity

   b. The type lesson for each group with an indication of specific skill which is being developed (reference when used)

   c. An example of each skill and an indication of the concrete material being used to develop concepts

3. Handwriting, Spelling and Language

   a. Handwriting

      (1) Skill being practiced with each group

      (2) Words and sentences being used with each group

   b. Spelling (two groups)

      (1) List the word or words being developed with each group

      (2) Note the purpose of each lesson (presentation, practice, or test)

      (3) List sentences being used for practice

   c. Library and Literature

      (1) Purpose of lesson planned

      (2) References

   d. Language

      (1) Purpose of lesson

      (2) Skill being developed

      (3) References

4. Music and Rhythm

   a. Type of lesson (singing, listening, or rhythm)

   b. Reference (name and number of album or music text)

5. Social Living

   a. Unit topic

   b. Problem being developed

   c. Type of lesson (research, discussion, or review on culmination)

   d. References (books and audio-visual aids)

6. Activity Period

   a. Class projects

   b. Group projects

c. Individual projects

d. Clean up assignments if other than those listed on Clean Up Chart

7. Physical Education

Types of Activities

a. Class activities

b. Group activities

c. Individual activities

III. The Plan Book

A. Choice of Plan Book Techniques

Some teachers prefer keeping their plan on daily entries; others prefer using blocked pages for a week's plan. It is up to the teacher to choose whichever method she prefers. It would be wise to investigate the procedure used within the school as this might influence the teacher's final choice of plan form. The important issue is that everyone, no matter what the years of service, should keep a written running record of the daily activities planned for and executed with the class.

B. Kinds of Plan Books

1. Separate Entry Daily Plan

The separate entry plan provides a daily running account of the projected activities written on separate pages in the plan book. Each daily unit is dated and contains a detailed account of the activities planned for the day.

2. Blocked Page Weekly Plan

The blocked page weekly plan provides a view of the whole week's activities blocked in by days. All of the information is contained within blocks. It allows an overview for continuity and sequence at a glance.

1. The Separate Entry Daily Plan

Monday, September 9	
Opening Exercises 9:00 - 9:10	
Reading 9:10 - 10:10	Group 2 Group 3 Group 1
Relaxation 10:10 - 10:20	
Arithmetic 10:20 - 11:10	Group 2 Group 3 Group 1
Music 11:10 - 11:30	
Lunch 11:30 - 12:20	

2. The Blocked Page Weekly Plan

Subject Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Opening Exercises 9:00-9:10					
Reading 9:10-10:10					
Relaxation 10:10-10:20					
Arithmetic 10:20-11:10					
Music 11:10-11:30					

C. Availability of the Plan Book

The plan book should be kept on the teacher's desk so that it is readily available for referral and consultation by the teacher, or, in her absence, by the substitute teacher.

D. Purpose of the Plan Book

The plan book should serve as a reference for the teacher from week to week as what has been planned and what needs further development is checked off. In looking back through past weeks, the learning experiences can be checked and a plan devised which will promote the continuity of the program.

ORGANIZATION CF THE CLASSROOM

I. Classroom Appearance

A. Physical Environment

1. Desk Placement

The desks should be placed so that light enters the room over the pupils' left shoulders. Every effort should be made to avoid glare in pupils' eyes as they work. Care should also be taken to place work on the blackboard so that it is easily seen. Since classroom furniture of the present day is moveable, it is a simple matter to arrange seating so that no child is seated at a disadvantage.

2. Window Shades

Window shades should be regulated to control the amount of light and to avoid glare or direct sunshine on the pupils.

3. Room Ventilation

The room must be properly ventilated at all times. Fresh circulation of air should be provided whenever necessary. This may be accomplished by raising the lower half of the window and lowering the upper half. New buildings are ventilated by slanting the windows at the desired angle. If the windows are open, the doors may be closed to avoid a draft. In some schools, there are regulations set up for ventilating rooms. The teacher should become familiar with her own school regulations at the opening session.

4. Room Temperature

The rooms are to be kept at a maximum winter temperature of 70°. The teacher may have little control over the amount of heat except in schools in which each room is heated by an individual

gas furnace. Care should be taken by the teacher to keep controlled temperature in her room so that the pupils have maximum comfort. A thermometer should hang in a central location where the mercury can be easily observed.

5. Size of Furniture

Opportunity Classes are furnished with varying heights of moveable furniture. The pupils should sit in chairs which permit their feet to rest firmly, comfortably and flat on the floor with their backs resting against the back of the chair.Any other seating is uncomfortable and will interfere with the pupils' performance.

B. Housekeeping

Keeping a classroom neat and clean should be an integral part of the daily school program. Some children never have any other experience with neatness and order except as they learn it in the classroom. They must be taught to be aware of dust, bits of paper on the floor, clean blackboard ledges, window sills and every part of the room. They will develop an interest and appreciation only when they share in the housekeeping. This can probably be best accomplished through rotating jobs assigned to classroom helpers. The following items should be among those considered by the careful teacher who is aware of the elements concerned in good classroom housekeeping.

1. Regulating windows and blinds
2. Watering plants and keeping them healthy, clean and attractive
3. Washing blackboards and ledges
4. Beating blackboard erasers

5. Keeping individual children's desks as well as the teacher's desk in good order
6. Keeping a clean floor
7. Keeping a neat and orderly cloak room
8. Keeping neat and well organized closets and supply drawers
9. Keeping neat and orderly bookcase shelves
10. Maintain clean quarters for any classroom pets

Perhaps the rule of "A place for everything, and everything in its place," would best describe the kind of well-kept classroom which should be the objective of every Opportunity Class. The children should enter a neat room in the morning and leave a neat room at each dismissal.

C. Arrangement of Equipment, Supplies and Materials

1. The Pupils' Desks

Pupils' desks may be arranged in many attractive and funtional groupings to better facilitate work. The children may sit in groups of two, four, or six for some occasions. For other activities, they could be seated in a circle or a horseshoe.They might be seated in an X, a V, or a T formation. The arrangement should be purposeful, well-balanced and functional. This can be easily accomplished if the children are trained to move their chairs and tables safely and quietly.

2. The Teacher's Desk

The teacher's desk should at all times serve as an example of neatness, cleanliness and orderliness. It should be attractively arranged with the necessary equipment and lesson plans.

3. The Daily Supplies

Supplies for daily activities should be neatly arranged and made accessible for both teacher and pupils. To facilitate a smoothly running school day, these supplies should be made ready before school convenes. This will prevent confusion, misunderstandings, and loss of valuable time.

4. Cupboards and Supply Drawers

Cupboards and supply drawers should be carefully organized at the beginning of the school year. The children and the teacher should know where everything is kept and be aware of the need for keeping supplies neat and orderly. Every effort should be made to systematically weed out unnecessary surplus so that useless things do not clutter and accumulate. Papers should be kept together, in neat piles, books organized according to level or interest area, etc. Perhaps one of the most flagrant errors on the part of the teacher is accumulating piles of old practice materials. Any papers left over can be placed in folders for the children to take home or to be used for supplementary work. The important thing is to remember to avoid disorganization and clutter.

5. Tools

Tools should be classified according to type and kept together in a well-organized fashion. Most teachers like to make tool boards. An outline of each tool shows where it belongs. Each tool is hung in its proper place. If space does not permit the use of a tool board, the tools can be arranged neatly in the work table drawer or on a cupboard shelf. Tools should be kept clean and in good order. The responsibility for tools can be given to a child as his classroom duty.

6. Storage of Supplies and Materials

Storage of supplies and materials should be made in cupboards whenever possible. The room should not be cluttered with cartons. If it is absolutely necessary to store any current materials in a cardboard box, the box should be painted and placed in an inconspicuous place. Such boxes offer fire hazards and tend to detract from the appearance of the room.Some teachers have painted foot lockers or chests to augment their storage spaces. Wooden boxes with hinged lids also can be painted and used for storage.

7. Bookcases

Bookcases should be organized to look neat and attractive. If the bookcase has glass doors, and is used for supplies, many teachers attach attractive panels of pupils' work behind the glass door. These may be decorated paper or decorated (block printed) material.

D. Classroom Decoration

There is perhaps no more important aspect of classroom management than the decoration of the classroom. The children should be proud of their classroom. It should attract the attention of the whole school. It should provide a cheerful, stimulating environment in which the children work with interest and enthusiasm. If the room is not attractive, there is a lack of spirit and appreciation of on-going activity, making the children listless and disinterested. Decorating the room is a teacher-pupil activity accomplished through mutual interest, understanding, cooperation and responsibility. It should evidence the <u>current</u> unit, offer a display of good classroom work and

give evidence of a vital and interesting program. Above all, the displays should not be static or accumulative. They should be changed frequently as the program develops in order to insure the children's interests.

1. Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards should have headings or a caption within the reading comprehension of the class. In addition, sentences should be pasted (written or printed by the pupils) under each exhibit, picture, or object. The boards should be carefully organized, selected, and neatly arranged. All corners of papers or friezes should be tacked to the board. Some teachers assign the arrangements of the bulletin boards to a small committee. Others arrange exhibits as a class project. Either method is acceptable and they are interchangeable.

2. Easels

Easels may be used to display current art projects on which the children are working. They are not, however, to be used as a display for finished projects or as chart holders. Easels are provided as a surface for creative sketching, painting, and drawing.

3. Chart Holders

Chart holders are provided to hold original chart stories and poems developed by individual children, groups, or by the class. The charts should always have illustrations which can be original drawings or commercial pictures.

4. Plants

Plants make an attractive addition to the room. They also provide good science experiences. The children may decorate the

containers and make the rests on which the plants are placed.Ivy, philadendron, sweet potato vines, grapefruit seeds, lemon seeds, geraniums, and chinese lilies are among the more easily cared for plants.

II. Classroom Interest Centers

A. Unit Exhibits

The unit provides the center of interest of class activities. Evidence of the unit should always be apparent. This may be provided through a display of models, making maps, papier mache' figures, friezes, related art activities, sand table scenes, charts and booklets. A part of the room must be allotted to provide an area for unit development. This center would take precedence over any other interest area.

B. The Library

School libraries are provided in most schools, and Opportunity Classes in many schools have scheduled visits with the librarians. To augment this experience, or to provide the only library experience (where there is no school library), there should be a library in each classroom. Teachers should use and designate a corner in the room where a bookcase and table make up the library center and books are readily available. The children should be encouraged to make good use of the library, and books at their level of ease should stimulate their interest in reading.

C. A Personal Appearance Corner

Every effort must be made to encourage Opportunity Class children to make the most of their personal appearance. Good grooming is a

definite daily essential. To promote interest and establish this very important habit, a dressing table and chair may be constructed out of orange crates and a board. The table can be painted or draped with a skirt made by the girls. A small mirror should be mounted over the table. Such a corner will encourage the children to look at themselves and see if they are neat. Soap and towels are kept on the shelf of the table.

Some rooms in new schools are equipped with mirrors over the sink. This becomes the personal appearance corner. With older children, a full length mirror is sometimes attached to the door or near the door. The personal appearance corner may vary according to the room, but it should be provided because it performs such an important function in the education of retarded children.

It is a good practice to have a good grooming box which holds soap, comb, and finger nail file. This may be kept in the child's desk.

D. Science Center

A science center provides a spot where children may actively engage in activities which will promote their understanding of natural phenomenon and satisfy their curiosity about the world in which they live. They should be encouraged to contribute specimens that they have found or have been given, and have the opportunity to share the information informally with each other. This center should be changed regularly so that the children's interest will be kept alive.

E. Music Center

A xylophone provides a great deal of pleasure to the children for use before school and in the music period. Written music should

be available so that the children can practice playing by note. If possible, a victrola should also be included and the children taught to carefully put records on the machine. They can also be encouraged to bring in carefully selected records. Sometimes the children can construct their own instruments such as drums, cymbals, marimbas, and musical glasses. These can be available in the musical center.

F. Game Center

Children enjoy the opportunity to play games as a part of their free activity periods. These may include commercial as well as games made in handwork activity periods. The class enjoys checkers, dominoes, bingo, word games, arithmetic games, pick-up-sticks, ten pins, matching cards, jig-saw puzzles, and ring toss games. Some child should be in charge of the game center so that the corner may be kept neat and well organized. All the games should be kept in the game center, being returned there at the conclusion of the activity period. The child in charge should check over the supply to see that everything is returned.

G. Class Pets

Class pets furnish real enjoyment for children and provide opportunities for them to learn to give pets proper care. Among the pets which may be successfully kept in the classroom for <u>short</u> lengths of time are: guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, white mice, parakeets, chicks, ducklings. Turtles, gold fish, salamanders and guppies may remain with the class for the school year. The class must realize the responsibility a class pet brings. Quarters <u>must</u> be kept clean and fresh. Proper food must be provided, and holiday care furnished when the class is not in session. Care for the pets offers a fine opportunity for assigned classroom duties.

III. Organizational Routines

A. Distribution of Papers, Books, Supplies and Equipment

A routine should always be established and followed when materials are distributed. Quick and quiet distribution is essential for good classroom management.

A Helpers' Chart should indicate the rotation of the children who are responsible for giving out such supplies as papers, crayons, scissors and paste. The group leaders for each group should be held responsible for the distribution of group text books and assignment papers.

Supplies should be ready for distribution before each session. Classroom control is endangered when the teacher takes class time to gather together the supplies and equipment needed for a lesson. Everything should be readily available in a prescribed place for distribution by those in charge.

Standards, also, should be set up so that the children understand that supplies are to be conserved and that they may have only one paper for a given lesson.

B. Moving About the School

Pupils should travel through the halls and about the building in a quiet and orderly manner. The children should be lined up before leaving the room. When this routine has not been established, the teacher must train the class to develop proper habits. The following technique is one suggested procedure.

1. The children should be called one by one, or row by row, or group by group, or boys and girls.
2. Each child should stand quietly in line.

3. The teacher should explain how the class should walk through the halls without disturbing other people in the building.
4. A place should be designated, not too far along the hall, at which the leader should stop.
5. The class proceeds to this place. If they have gone so far satisfactorily, tell them so. If not, suggest improvement.
6. Designate another place a little farther along and encourage the class to try to improve.
7. When this place is reached, stop, get the attention of the class, and repeat the procedure until the destination is reached.

Frequently a noisy class can go a short distance satisfactorily. If they attempt to go a long distance, they become noisy and disorganized. As the habits improve, the distance should be gradually increased until the entire "trip" can be achieved in quiet and orderly way.

C. Moving About the Classroom

Opportunity Class children must be helped at the beginning of the school year to learn to move in an orderly fashion. This skill is difficult for many children to learn. Rules and routines must be established by the teacher and pupils so that they are clearly understood. A chart listing the classroom rules should be developed by the teacher and the children and posted for referral and emphasis. Having evolved the standards, the class and teacher work together consistently towards the goals they have cooperatively set up.Some pertinent standards are:

Classroom Rules

1. We will be polite and friendly.
2. We will wait our turn to speak.

3. We will raise our hands to speak.

4. We will work quietly.

5. We will do neat work.

6. We will do our own work.

7. We will move our chairs quietly and correctly.

8. We will move about in the room quietly.

9. We will try to speak clearly and quietly.

10. We will share tools and materials.

Classrooms will vary in their working climate. Some rules will be more important in one room than in another. It will be wise to begin with what seems to be most important in an individual classroom. Since the rules are made up by the children, they are most likely to reflect what the class feels will be most imprrtant. When a rule is broken, attention should be focused on that rule so that the children are reminded of the rule and the habit established.